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Activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women to eliminate violence against women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the Fund to eliminate violence against women, which was prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166.

Report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the fund to eliminate violence against women

1. In its resolution 50/166, the General Assembly mandated the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to strengthen its activities to eliminate violence against women in order to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.[1] That resolution is also the founding resolution of the United Nations Trust Fund in

* E/CN.6/2007/L.6.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

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Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, which was set up in 1996 and became operational in 1997, with UNIFEM as its administrator. The resolution positioned the Trust Fund as a key inter-agency grant-making mechanism to support local, national and international work by Governments and non-governmental organizations to end violence against women. In administering the Trust Fund, UNIFEM has established consultative mechanisms with a wide range of United Nations partners and leading experts on gender-based violence as part of system-wide efforts to eliminate violence against women.

2. The present report, to the fifty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the seventh session of the Human Rights Council, documents the activities undertaken by UNIFEM in 2007 as administrator of the Trust Fund as well as its programming on violence against women.

Background and context

3. Since the 1990s, the right of women and girls to be free from violence has been recognized as an international human right, and Member States have adopted a number of intergovernmental resolutions in which they commit to preventing and eliminating gender-based violence. Most recently, the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/133, called on the international community, including the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, to support national efforts to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality in order to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. The international community has recognized, in a series of agreements reached and resolutions adopted since the 1990s, that violence against women not only is one of the most systematic and pervasive human rights violations, but also erodes women's health, productivity and capacity to act, to the detriment of countries' efforts to overcome poverty and foster equitable development.

4. As affirmed by the Millennium Project Tax Force on Education and Gender Equality in its report,[2] freedom from violence, especially for girls and women, is a core right essential to their ability to lead a productive life. Violence against women and girls dampens prospects for achieving the Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction, gender equality, health and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS. In the context of the global consensus on the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment, both as an objective in itself and as central to achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals, a number of factors in the current policy context are also conducive to the achievement of significant progress on the issue of violence against women and girls. As mentioned in the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women,[3] an increasing number of governments have enacted national laws and adopted plans of action on the issue. In addition, a growing number of non-governmental research institutions and other civil society organizations are taking on the issue of violence against women as an integral part of their mission. It is also important to note that United Nations reform and its emphasis on "Delivering as one" (see A/61/582) is also galvanizing an increasing number of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and

[2] United Nations Millennium Project, Task Force on Education and General Equality (Earthscan, London and Sterling, Virginia, 2005).

[3] See A/61/122/Add.1 for a global scan of the status of policies and laws.

prompting them to intensify their work on the issue of gender-based violence, both collectively and within the scope of their own mandates.

5. The greatest achievements in the course of the last decade have been in the areas of awareness-raising and standard-setting. The challenge of the current decade lies in ensuring respect for and the effective implementation of existing human rights standards and in making certain that the root causes and consequences of violence against women are tackled at all levels, from the home to the transnational arena, as called for by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women. The multiplicity of forms of violence against women and girls, as well as the fact that such violence frequently occurs at the intersection of gender and other forms of discrimination, makes the adoption of multifaceted strategies to effectively prevent and combat gender-based violence a necessity (see E/CN.4/2006/61). At the midpoint between the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) and the 2015 target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, increased momentum in this priority area is essential.

United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women

6. Since its inception, the Trust Fund has been a key global mechanism for catalysing change and demonstrating model strategies to end violence against women. The occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Trust Fund, commemorated by UNIFEM with an event held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in February 2007, celebrated the effective work of grantees while advocating for the scaling up of proven strategies. Eminent speakers included the Deputy Secretary-General; the President of Liberia (through a video message); UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador Nicole Kidman, participating via a live video feed; and Trust Fund grantees. Media advocacy materials on the Trust Fund, including a booklet, film and video spot, were widely disseminated.

7. Trust Fund current strategic directions for the period 2005-2008 are fully in line with the recommendations of the Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women, which called for greater attention to implementation of existing human rights standards, multisectoral approaches, strengthened monitoring and evaluation, and strong institutional mechanisms at the local, national, regional and international levels to ensure action, coordination, monitoring and accountability. In addition, in its resolution 61/143, the General Assembly called upon Member States to increase significantly their voluntary financial support for activities related to preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women, including the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women.

8. In this context, the Trust Fund is glad to report that it has met its target of $10 million in contributions in 2007 and has set a goal of $20 million for 2008.

9. In implementing its 2005-2008 strategy, the Trust Fund has been able to demonstrate positive initial results with respect to four of its key pillars, as described below.

Enhancing impact

10. By focusing on support for the implementation of national laws, policies and action plans on ending violence against women, the Trust Fund, through its grant-making, has been able to bridge serious gaps between laws and action plans on the one hand and their implementation on the other at both the national and local levels. Grantees' strategies include building an awareness of new laws and policies; working with the criminal and civil justice systems to develop internal procedures for investigations and restraining orders; enhancing the capacities of judiciaries, law enforcement and health workers; mobilizing communities, including men and marginalized groups, to translate such laws and plans into effect and promote their conformity with human rights standards; advocating for adequate budgetary allocations for the implementation of existing laws and policies; creating data-collection systems and indicators at the national and local levels to assist in monitoring such policies and laws; and building momentum through targeted mass media campaigns. A more detailed overview of grantees' work under the 2007 and earlier implementation windows can be found below.

Deepening involvement

11. Trust Fund grantees have supported broad-based partnerships and multi-stakeholder alliances across a range of actors, from governments and non-governmental organizations, to the private sector, parliamentarians, religious and community leaders, and the media. Several grantees have also established multiagency committees and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms to build stronger accountability mechanisms with key stakeholders. In addition, the Trust Fund has fostered greater coordination and coherence among global and regional partners, including in the formulation of policies and decision-making on grants.

12. In 2007, UNIFEM convened 19 inter-agency programme appraisal committees at the global and regional levels involving a total of 21 United Nations entities and several leading experts on ending violence against women.[4] United Nations entities that participated in Trust Fund decision-making in 2007 include the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the International Labour Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Department for Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In addition,

[4] In 2007, programme appraisal committees were held in Nairobi, Accra, Freetown, Johannesburg (South Africa), Kigali, Bangkok, Suva, Kathmandu, Amman, Rabat, Mexico City, Brasília, Quito, Christ Church (Barbados), Bratislava and New York (United States of America), covering Africa, Asia, Pacific and Arab States, Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and three United Nations Resident Coordinators (Colombia, Peru and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)) also took part in the regional programme appraisal committees.

13. Member States and private-sector and other donors have increased their contributions to the Trust Fund, resulting in a more than tenfold increase over the past four years and in a grant allocation of close to $5 million in 2007. Despite this expansion in the resource base, however, the demand for Trust Fund support continues to be enormous, with more than $100 million in requests received in 2007. Donors to the Trust Fund in 2007 include the Governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United States of America, and UNIFEM national committees in Iceland, Switzerland and the United States. In addition, the Trust Fund has benefited from partnerships with the private sector. With the support of Johnson & Johnson, a special window on the interlinkage between violence against women and HIV/AIDS was opened in 2005, and a knowledge cohort of select grantees was set up in 2007. In addition, there have been other modest contributions from private-sector partners such as TAG Heuer, Omega and London-based advertising agency Leo Burnett.[5] Contributors in 2007 also included non-profit organizations Zonta International and the Transition Network as well as many individual donors who contributed on the occasion of the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Trust Fund.

14. Beyond contributing resources, United Nations Member States also draw on Trust Fund expertise and experiences to reduce violence against women. UNIFEM involves Member States and donors in its public-information initiatives to raise awareness on emerging issues and effective strategies. That relationship is often enhanced through the good offices of grantees as well as through UNIFEM national committees and their partners.

15. The work of the Trust Fund has also been replicated at the regional and national levels in projects that are generating their own resources and grant-making. The Arab States trust fund for the empowerment of women, which is concluding its operations in 2007, facilitated networking and cross-regional learning among grantees. Two initiatives supported in 2006-2007 included the development of an advocacy network to end violence against women in south-eastern Morocco and awareness-raising among unions and civil society on sexual harassment in the workplace through the production of information, education and communication materials, including a documentary film, in Tunisia.[6] In Afghanistan, a Special Fund for the Elimination of Violence against Women was created in 2007. Managed by UNIFEM in partnership with the ministries of women's affairs and of education, civil society partners, UNFPA and UNHCR, the fund will support initiatives that focus on developing the national capacity to prevent sexual and gender-based

[5] The Leo Burnett agency has developed a public service announcement on ending violence against women and supported an Internet campaign (http://www.saynotoviolence.org/), launched in November 2007, to raise public awareness around the globe.

[6] The Arab States Trust Fund was designed as a two-year funding mechanism and was extended for an additional year. It has been supported by contributions from the Government of Germany.

violence and to protect and provide services to women and girl survivors or at risk of violence.[7]

Ensuring efficiency

16. The Trust Fund offers an efficient and transparent mechanism for channelling resources to efforts aimed at ending violence against women and contributing to effective approaches in that respect that have the potential for scale-up at the national levels, which is especially relevant in the context of new aid modalities. Since its inception, the Trust Fund has awarded more than $19 million in grants to 263 projects in 115 countries. Operational efficiency is secured by minimizing staffing and administrative expenses at the headquarters level and by ensuring a strong emphasis on decentralized operations in order to ensure that contributions are forwarded to country programming. The devolution of the decision-making process to regional inter-agency programme appraisal committees, whose members are more in tune with national realities and best placed to determine grantee relevance and contributions to in-country priorities, has offered additional opportunities to establish linkages and synergies with other ongoing national programmes and efforts. As resources and contributions to the Trust Fund have increased, and with a view to supporting meaningful and sustainable programming, the Fund is making larger, longer-term grants for a period of two to three years.

Addressing sustainable knowledge and capacity development

17. A key priority is enhancing systems and capacities among Trust Fund grantees to use evaluation as a means of strengthening the evidence base for effective approaches. Building on the evaluation methodology of Trust Fund projects that was developed in 2006 in partnership with the World Bank, the Trust Fund is currently devising an evaluation strategy and plan on the basis of cutting-edge evaluation approaches and methodologies that support replication and upscaling. It is expected to be completed early in 2008, following due consultations with the Trust Fund's global inter-agency project appraisal committee.

18. In June 2007, the Trust Fund, in collaboration with the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS and UNFPA, convened a state-of-the-art expert consultation on evaluation approaches to ending violence against women and its intersection with HIV/AIDS which brought together leading evaluation experts, United Nations partners and a knowledge cohort of eight Trust Fund grantees[8] to discuss the findings of selected evaluations of interventions and to highlight trends, approaches and challenges in evaluation methodologies. That was followed by a hands-on programme and evaluation design workshop that provided technical assistance with a view to enhancing grantee monitoring and evaluation frameworks and facilitating targeted global knowledge generation. A global evaluation plan has been designed to support each programme's contribution to a common knowledge pool as well as to address cross-cutting questions and lessons learned relating to the intersection of

[7] The Special Fund is being supported by contributions from the Governments of Denmark, Norway, Italy and Switzerland and by the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and UNHCR.

[8] Early in 2007, the Trust Fund awarded grants to a cohort of eight programmes as part of the 2006 grant cycle and under the special window on violence against women and HIV/AIDS. Initiatives are being implemented in Botswana, the Dominican Republic, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, and Viet Nam.

HIV/AIDS and violence against women. The Trust Fund will provide technical and financial support for this process over a period of three years so as to ensure that the lessons learned from this pilot are available to all future projects and shared widely with key stakeholders.

19. Capacity development of Trust Fund grantees was also supported at the subregional level. UNIFEM offices in anglophone West Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and the Pacific facilitated capacity-building workshops for grantees along with other non-governmental organizations working in the region, with a view to strengthening results-based management skills and processes and deepening understanding of violence against women and of the strategies required for its elimination.

The 2007 Trust Fund grant-making cycle

20. The twelfth Trust Fund call was issued in 2007, targeting two critical areas of work to end violence against women. First, for the third year, the focus was on supporting the effective implementation of national laws, policies and plans of action on ending violence against women. The second area relates to the interlinkages between violence against women and HIV/AIDS. That window has been operational for three years, in collaboration with the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS.

21. As in previous years, the Trust Fund used an open and competitive process to invite proposals for the two grant-making windows. A total of 512 proposals were received, with requests totalling close to $105 million. Programme appraisal committees awarded nearly $5 million to 29 initiatives in 36 countries under both windows.[9] Albania, Cape Verde, Guinea, Maldives, Mozambique and Sierra Leone were first-time recipients.

22. Under the dedicated implementation window, the Trust Fund awarded $3.5 million in grants to 20 initiatives in 26 countries,[10] including 6 initiatives by central and local governments.[11] Many of the grantees are supporting the implementation of laws and policies aimed at ending domestic and sexual violence, whereas others focus on anti-trafficking efforts and the eradication of harmful practices and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. The following examples highlight select grantee initiatives under the 2007 implementation window:

(a) The district of Ngoma in the East Province of Rwanda will promote the implementation of Rwanda's Family Code and of national policies to end gender inequality and gender-based violence. The first baseline study on domestic violence and sexual violence will be undertaken in cooperation with national women's councils, and information on women's rights to protection and legal redress will be provided to community members through radio broadcasts, community dialogues

[9] See http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/trust_fund_grantees.php for a detailed list.

[10] Albania, Algeria, Argentina and Brazil (regional project), Cambodia, Cape Verde, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, Guyana, Jamaica, Maldives, Mexico, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa (regional project also covering Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia), the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

[11] Cape Verde, Jamaica, Maldives, Pakistan, Rwanda and Papua New Guinea.

and conferences. Local leaders and authorities will also be sensitized to the importance of implementing laws and policies, resulting in a three-year plan of action for stakeholders at the district level;

(b) In Egypt, the Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development will support the implementation of relevant Criminal Code provisions and the Ministerial Decree 261 of 1996 prohibiting female genital mutilation. The process of raising the awareness of legal professionals and executive officials with respect to women's rights and the legal grounds of gender equality is being targeted specifically at the ministries of Justice, the Interior and Social Solidarity, and at the National Council for Women, police departments, the judiciary, the legislative, the media, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations. The project will enhance the capacities of shelters, advocate for the establishment of monitoring bodies and empower women in vulnerable and marginalized communities in six Egyptian governorates;

(c) In Albania, Refleksione Association, in partnership with the Network against Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking, will support the development of councils against domestic violence — community-based, multisectoral referral systems to support survivors of domestic violence — in five districts. This is in support of the 2006 Law on Measures against Violence in Family Relations, which provides for improving the coordination of the local-level response to domestic violence. The project will thus support the local capacities of 10 districts to monitor the implementation of the new domestic-violence law and the National Strategy on Domestic Violence, pending its adoption, as well strengthen women's legal literacy;

(d) In Jamaica, Women's Media Watch and the Bureau of Women's Affairs of the Ministry of Information, Culture, Youth and Sports will partner to support the implementation of the 1996 Domestic Violence Act and the National Policy against sexual harassment, as well as regional and international women's rights conventions, including the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. To that end, the project will develop the capacities of stakeholders, including judges, magistrates and Government and private-sector employees, to implement those instruments and focus on reducing tolerance of violence against women among journalists, teachers, counsellors and community leaders. A public-education and awareness-raising campaign will be conducted through the media and other public forums;

(e) In Papua New Guinea, the Gender and Development Division of the Government's Department for Community Development will be supporting the implementation of criminal law outlawing marital rape and sexual assault. A national campaign will sensitize leaders, various professionals and community members to existing laws and the consequences of sexual violence. Programmes to support survivors will be piloted in one urban and one rural district, and village magistrates and law enforcement officers will be sensitized to the issue of sexual violence. A mass-media campaign will be implemented featuring respected men and women and reinforcing the message "no means no". The project will also advance changes in the training curricula of teachers, nurses and social workers, with a view to enhancing the identification of and support to women survivors of sexual violence.

23. As part of the 2007 grant cycle, nine initiatives were supported under the special window addressing the interlinkages between violence against women and HIV/AIDS with close to $1.3 million in 12 countries.[12] These initiatives focus on two key perspectives: reducing all forms of violence against women and girls as an effective means of HIV prevention; and preventing and reducing the stigma and violence that HIV-positive and AIDS-affected women and girls face by supporting their access to support services, treatment, human rights education and empowerment opportunities. Examples of 2007 grantees working on the linkages are:

(a) In Chibuto and Xai-Xai, two districts of the province of Gaza in southern Mozambique with a high prevalence of HIV, Forum Mulher, in partnership with the Government, will support the implementation of the National Plan on Advancement of Women (2007-2009) and the National Strategic Plan to Combat HIV/AIDS (2006-2009). The project is aimed at enhancing access to services by women survivors of violence through the development of standardized procedures for clinical, psychological, police and legal assistance. Community dialogue focused on changing harmful traditional beliefs and practices that increase women's and girls' risk of HIV infection will be strengthened by the participation of traditional and public-opinion leaders. A national men-to-men campaign will be launched to promote men's active participation in efforts to eradicate violence against women and girls as well as HIV;

(b) In implementation of a regional initiative, FEIM Argentina, with partners in Brazil, Chile and Uruguay, will undertake research on the intersection of violence against women and HIV/AIDS in those four countries, with a view to promoting public policies to address the twin pandemics. Qualitative and quantitative research methods will include interviews with women survivors of violence, public employees, civil society organizations and the academic community. On the basis of national reports that will be widely shared with the media, governments and women's networks, a regional report will be prepared and presented in the framework of the fifth Latin American and Caribbean Forum on HIV/AIDS and STDs, to be held in Peru in 2009. The project will also develop a communication strategy to disseminate its findings that will include the creation of a website.

Achievements of Trust Fund grantees

24. Trust Fund grantees working to support the implementation of laws and policies to end violence against women have achieved key results, including enhanced political will; strengthened institutional mechanisms and multi-stakeholder partnerships; and effected changes in practices at the country level. The following achievements are illustrative of grantee initiatives supported through the 2005 and 2006 calls:

(a) In the context of enhancing political will and establishing multi-stakeholder partnerships at national and community levels, in Mali, a multi-stakeholder coalition against female genital excision — involving the Ministry of Education, members of Parliament, mayors, community-level excision practitioners and traditional and religious leaders — has been set up and is advocating for

[12] Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mozambique, Peru and the Russian Federation, plus a regional project covering Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

anti-excision efforts. In Dominica, the establishment of multi-stakeholder committees in partnership with the Government and civil society and religious groups has helped to increase understanding of international human rights standards and enabled the pledging of commitments by each agency to a joint action plan;

(b) With respect to strengthening the administration of justice and improving women's access to justice, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, close cooperation among the Ministries of the Interior, Labour and Social Affairs, Centres for Social Care and non-governmental organizations is strengthening the effectiveness of investigations into and the prosecution of domestic violence under criminal law by prosecutors and investigating judges. In addition, a bylaw defining procedures for implementing and monitoring civil restraining orders has been adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In India, the Trust Fund grantee has worked to increase women survivors' access to justice by supporting a uniform interpretation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act in partnership with the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the National Commission for Women and the National Judicial Academy, at the central level. A related initiative at the decentralized level has supported grass-roots advocates in monitoring the implementation of India's Domestic Violence Act by traditional justice delivery systems (Nyaya Panchayats);

(c) Women and girls living in abusive situations require holistic responses to their particular sets of needs — hence the importance of developing a network of integrated services. Testing and scaling up interdisciplinary, intersectoral models of intervention are a priority in order effectively to prevent and mitigate the consequences of violence against women and girls. In Bulgaria, a local intervention model involving the police, the judiciary and service providers is being established to support women survivors of domestic violence, in accordance with the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence of 2005. Interdisciplinary teams of trainers have imparted skills to police officers, magistrates, lawyers and representatives of non-governmental organizations in four municipalities, and a monitoring system of court files and statistics has also been set up. Furthermore, linkages are being forged with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to support future collaboration and the financial sustainability of services for survivors of domestic violence. In Cambodia, a cadre of committed community advocates has reached out to communities and facilitated access to services by women survivors. Legal counselling for women survivors of intimate-partner violence and their abusive partners has empowered women to regain control over their lives and led to partners changing their violent behaviour;

(d) In connection with transforming discriminatory attitudes and practices, in Togo, data on different forms of widowhood rites has been generated and crucial links to HIV risk highlighted. Those findings were shared with stakeholders throughout the country, including traditional and religious leaders, non-governmental organizations, women's and widows' rights organizations and judicial institutions in order to advocate for joint action plans by local authorities and create alternative ceremonies so as to abolish widowhood rites. In Mali, as a result of a multi-stakeholder coalition, in the districts of Bamako (the capital), Yanfolia (Sikasso region), Kita (Kayes region) and San (Ségou region), religious leaders are now using their regular sermons to share information on practices to eliminate excision. In Zimbabwe, sustained sensitization processes have prompted

traditional leaders to agree to explore alternative practices, such as offering livestock to appease spirits, instead of women or girls.

25. Grantees under the special window to address the intersection of violence against women and HIV/AIDS have also invested in increasing women's access to services that address the twin pandemics, empowering women living with HIV and creating supportive communities. The following achievements are illustrative of grantees' initiatives supported through the 2005 call for proposals:

(a) In the context of empowering women survivors of violence, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti, survivors of sexual violence, including women living with HIV as a consequence of such violence, have increased access to medical care and voluntary HIV counselling and testing, including post-exposure prophylaxis. In India, the community of HIV-positive women has increased women's access to justice, property rights and livelihood opportunities through legal literacy training and dialogue with governments. The grantee's experiences are being taken to different districts in partnership with UNICEF;

(b) With respect to the creation of supportive communities, community outreach is a major aspect of grantee strategies and is essential for addressing societal norms and behaviours that fuel discrimination and violence against women and girls affected by HIV and AIDS. Grantees had collectively reached tens of thousands of community members through radio broadcast, the theatre and other means by the end of 2006. Engaging men was a particular focus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Nepal, as was working with teachers and students in Peru and Samoa.

UNIFEM programming under its 2004-2007 multi-year funding framework

26. In addition to administering the Trust Fund, UNIFEM identifies opportunities and supports innovative and catalytic strategies in its programming and partnerships to end violence against women. These efforts are supported through core and cost-sharing funds secured by UNIFEM (UNIFEM does not use Trust Fund resources for its programming). Four outcome-level results are pursued in programming aimed at ending violence under the UNIFEM 2004-2007 multi-year funding framework, whereby legislation and policies are formulated and implemented to promote and protect women's human right to be free from violence; mainstream institutions demonstrate the leadership, commitment, technical capacity and accountability needed to address violence against women; gender-equality advocates have the knowledge and are positioned to spearhead and transform policies, programmes and resource allocations to end violence against women; and there is a change away from harmful and discriminatory attitudes and practices that perpetuate violence against women.

Programming for effective laws and policies

27. UNIFEM has supported the introduction and strengthening of legislation against gender-based violence, including laws against domestic violence and rape and family law provisions, in for instance, Cameroon, Colombia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Where efforts to reform laws and policies are at a preliminary stage, UNIFEM has supported reviews and assessments that have included, for example, a legislative review of national constitutions to assess compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Discrimination against Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as in partnership with UNICEF, a technical analysis of laws on the sexual abuse of children, in Barbados, Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Support for the dissemination of recent laws on violence against women was provided, for example, in Brazil, Haiti and Morocco. In Brazil, UNIFEM partnered with the Supreme Court to produce a DVD on the 2006 "Maria da Penha Law" against domestic violence, with a view to reaching an estimated 15 million homes, or 40 per cent of Brazil's population, through a broadcast on public television channels. In Morocco, two radio and television broadcast campaigns popularizing new provisions of the country's Family Code, Labour Code and Penal Code have led to an increased demand for the services of crisis centres by women survivors of violence.

28. UNIFEM has provided support for multi-stakeholder input into national actions plans to end violence against women in Algeria, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Maldives, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. In Algeria, collaborative technical assistance by UNIFEM, UNFPA and UNICEF has contributed to the establishment of a National Gender-based Commission and the adoption in 2007 of a National Strategy to Combat Gender-based Violence. In Rwanda, UNIFEM and UNDP have partnered with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion to support the development of a national policy to address sexual and gender-based violence, a draft of which has been prepared for submission to Cabinet. In Maldives, UNIFEM supported the efforts of the Ministry of Family and Gender, in collaboration with multi-agency stakeholder involvement, to develop a draft action plan to implement the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the issue of violence against women as one of its priority areas. Enhancing women's participation in public security and urban planning with a view to ending violence against women in urban spaces is the focus of the "Safe Cities" regional programme, operating in select cities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Colombia, with the support of UNIFEM in partnership with UN-Habitat. Building on a two-country pilot initiative supported by a Trust Fund grant made in 2003, that initiative has strengthened networks and participatory processes involving women's community groups and municipal authorities, resulting in joint proposals and action plans at the municipal level to strengthen urban security from a gender perspective, including measures such as improving lighting on streets and redesigning public squares.

29. The effective implementation of existing laws and policies to end violence against women requires the allocation of sufficient budgetary resources by Governments. UNIFEM has enhanced efforts to support gender-responsive budgeting in the context of ending violence against women, for example in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, Mozambique and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In Mozambique, UNIFEM has been providing technical support to the Ministry of Interior to develop an action plan to end violence against women as well as advocating for budgetary allocations for the establishment of special police facilities to support women survivors of violence. In south-eastern Europe, UNIFEM has supported advocacy efforts to enhance the allocation of adequate resources to services for women survivors of domestic violence, including shelters, at the national level (in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and at the entity and local levels (in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Programming to strengthen mainstream institutional responses to violence against women

30. UNIFEM is working to develop the capacities of duty bearers to fulfil their obligations to promote and protect women's human rights, with a focus on law enforcement, the judiciary, parliamentarians, government ministries, armed forces, legal practitioners, academia and United Nations partners. In Zimbabwe, for instance, UNIFEM, in collaboration with UNFPA and UNICEF, supported training programmes for the judiciary, police forces, traditional leaders and the newly established Domestic Violence Council to enhance implementation of the new domestic violence law, building on earlier advocacy efforts that had informed the process of adopting the law. In East and South-East Asia, judges were trained on the issue of gender-based violence in the context of women's human rights, and a regional judicial colloquium for justices of supreme courts and appellate courts from seven countries was organized. Efforts to train police and to set up or strengthen specialized police units to intervene in cases of violence against women were supported in Cameroon, Jordan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and the Sudan. In Jordan, UNIFEM, in partnership with the Family Protection Department and under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, co-organized the first regional police training programme for law enforcement officials from 12 Arab States, which focused on police interventions in domestic-violence cases and techniques for interviewing women survivors. In partnership with UNDP, UNIFEM continued to support the operation of Rwanda's National Police Helpdesk, with a view to enhancing police capacities to prevent and rapidly respond to violence against women. UNIFEM and UNDP also developed a policy briefing paper on gender-sensitive police reform in post-conflict societies, which, building on both entities' experiences in developing the capacities of police services to respond to women's security needs, seeks to inform efforts to strengthen police responses to gender-based violence.

31. Responses to the pandemic of violence against women are being hampered by a lack of accurate data and statistics on its scope and prevalence. UNIFEM, in cooperation with governments, United Nations partners and civil society, is supporting efforts to strengthen the knowledge base on violence by enhancing improving the generation and use of data in, inter alia, Afghanistan, India, Jordan, Morocco, Rwanda, Slovakia, the Syrian Arab Republic and the seven countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. In India, UNIFEM, with funding from a private-sector partner — Pond's, a brand of Hindustan Lever Ltd. — supported the generation and publication of the first monitoring and evaluation report on the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, which analyses emerging trends and highlights good practices arising in different States in the application of the law that entered into force in 2006. Also in India, support was provided to a study highlighting the structural and economic violence experienced by widows in the city of Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh. In Morocco, a country-wide network of 40 women's crisis centres has developed an innovative database system to generate and analyse data on violence. The resulting analytical research report has informed the advocacy of women's non-governmental organizations for a national prevalence study on violence and for effective legislation against domestic violence.

32. UNIFEM has also worked within the United Nations system to advocate for a consistently applied policy to address violence against women in post-conflict needs

assessments and responses to crises, including ongoing support to system-wide efforts to enhance the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). UNIFEM is a founding member of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, an initiative comprising 12 United Nations entities — the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, the Department for Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WFP and WHO, whose goal is to coordinate and enhance the response of the United Nations system to sexual violence in conflict, crisis and recovery situations. United Nations Action has three pillars: advocacy, country-level support for United Nations system action, and knowledge generation. UNIFEM plays a lead role in advancing United Nations Action advocacy to build awareness of and commitment to ending sexual violence in conflict situations through intergovernmental processes and institutions, including the Security Council. UNIFEM also has worked to integrate responses to sexual violence into post-conflict governance and peacebuilding tools and has increased joint funds for sexual violence prevention and response, in support of United Nations Action.

33. UNIFEM is also working to strengthen the inclusion of commitments to achieve gender equality and end violence against women in the work of United Nations country teams and in peacebuilding. For instance, in Serbia, UNIFEM, in collaboration with UNDP and other United Nations country team partners, has supported participatory research on violence against women that identified policy strengths and gaps and offers a capacity-development and advocacy tool for the United Nations system to end violence. In Timor-Leste, as part of efforts by United Nations country teams, training programmes on the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women, with special focus on gender-based violence, were undertaken.

Programming to strengthen the capacity of gender equality advocates working to end violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual violence and trafficking in women

34. As part of that programming, UNIFEM has cultivated existing and has built new strategic partnerships with leaders in parliaments, governmental bodies and civil society in, inter alia, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Liberia, Morocco, Nepal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Uganda, Viet Nam and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In Liberia, for example, UNIFEM supported the Ministry of Gender and Development and the mobilization efforts made by women's organizations to promote the process of incorporating sexual and gender-based violence into the formulation of the country's poverty-reduction strategy and development plans for the period 2008-2011. In Sierra Leone, support was provided to rural women to advocate for the strengthening of the domestic violence draft law that was eventually adopted in 2007. In Rwanda, in partnership with UNDP, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was supported in the preparation and submission of a bill on sexual and gender-based violence, which was passed by Parliament in October 2007. Support for efforts made by the Ministry of Gender of Uganda to catalyse national dialogue and engage other key ministries, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, has contributed to the development of a national policy and action plan on sexual and gender-based

violence. In Haiti, in partnership with UNFPA and UNICEF, support was provided to a national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism bringing together State representatives, women's organizations and other civil society and international donor partners with a view to designing action plans to be piloted in two regions and to strengthening the provision of services to women survivors of violence.

35. UNIFEM has supported capacity development for service providers, for example in Egypt, where a network of pro bono lawyers at the National Women's Complaints Office, supported by UNIFEM, has assisted women survivors of violence in seeking legal redress. In Morocco, in partnership with UNFPA, a programme implemented by a country-wide network of counselling centres for women resulted in an increase in member organizations and a strengthened network and collective identity and also forged partnerships with the family law branches of the judiciary and other stakeholders. This model has been replicated in developing the capacities of a similar network in Algeria.

36. UNIFEM has also enhanced efforts to prevent violent attacks against women candidates running for public office in Sierra Leone and Kenya. In the latter country, this has included support for the launch of a rapid-response unit that provides security training and service referrals to women candidates. As part of its efforts to facilitate and enhance women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, in 2007 UNIFEM launched a large-scale six-country programme in Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Timor-Leste and Uganda, with a view to integrating women's concerns, including the issue of sexual and gender-based violence, into peace agendas and enhancing community-level responses aimed at preventing and responding to such violence.

Programming to bring about changes in discriminatory practices,

37. UNIFEM supported the mobilization of men and boys as key allies and advocates in the prevention of violence against women through multi-stakeholder campaigns, events and information, education and communication materials. This approach was taken, for example, in programmes to address masculinity and non-violent behaviour in India, Timor-Leste and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Other examples include Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, where UNIFEM spearheaded the development and implementation of a court-based perpetrator intervention programme, which, in the case of Saint Lucia, has been incorporated into the family courts' existing work. In Thailand, UNIFEM, in partnership with the Government, co-hosted a regional conference to identify strategies for engaging a critical mass of gender-sensitive men so as to eliminate violence and discrimination against women. In Rwanda, the partnership with the Rwanda Defence Forces, the National Police, the Forum for Activists against Torture and the Men's Resource Centre has generated new commitment at the highest level of the military in involving men in the work of ending sexual and gender-based violence.

38. UNIFEM has also supported round tables, panel discussions and theatre and multimedia campaigns during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence Campaigns (25 November-10 December) in Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste and Uganda. For example, in Pakistan, UNIFEM

launched the first think tank on violence against women, bringing together United Nations, other multilateral and bilateral partners and non-governmental organizations to exchange information and define areas of cooperation, and it facilitated an inter-faith dialogue on violence against women among religious scholars from the world's five main religions. In collaboration with United Nations partners, UNIFEM has supported the publication of a regional report on violence against women, entitled "No more: the right to live a life free from violence in Latin America and the Caribbean", which was coordinated by ECLAC and, among other things, highlights the need to translate political will into sustainable human, financial and technical resources in order to end impunity and prevent and prosecute violence against women and protect the rights of women survivors. At United Nations Headquarters level, UNIFEM launched an Internet-based advocacy campaign, "Say 'no' to violence against women", supported by United Nations partners and civil society organizations, as well as campaign spokesperson Nicole Kidman, UNIFEM Goodwill Ambassador.

Conclusions

39. Pervasive and ongoing violence against women across the globe fuels cultures of violence and undermines progress towards the goals of human rights, development and peace. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, in her recent report (E/CN.4/2006/61), has highlighted challenges in the application of the due-diligence standard, which tends to be limited to responding to violence against women when it occurs and is concentrated on legislative reform, access to justice and the provision of services. She highlighted the need for a greater focus on prevention, including the need to transform patriarchal gender structures and values that perpetuate and entrench violence against women.

40. To achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and to fulfil other key commitments that have been made to the world's women, it is critically important that the existing level of support provided to efforts to address violence against women be increased significantly, and that effective, innovative approaches be replicated on a larger scale.